St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio
DEC 19 '60

CASTRO AND MEXICO

—Lawrence T. King

THE

Commonweal

At Christmas

The Crib and the Throne

by John Whitney Evans

Twenty Years Later

Return to Paris

by Helene Iswolsky

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE . . . . . by John Cogley
POUND: LIFE AND WORK . . . . . by Richard Gilman
THE "SIMPLE" WAY . . . . . by Philip Burnham
SAGA OF SUFFERING . . . . . by Alice Ellen Mayhew
DINESEN'S SHADOWS . . . . . by William Dunlea

ume LXXIII, No. 13 December 23, 1960 Twenty-Five Cents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CAMPION HOUSE
OSTERLEY, ENGLAND
772 Priests Ordained

AT THE END of the First World War, a number of ex-servicemen wanted to consecrate their lives to the service of God in the priesthood. But they did not know Latin, they had forgotten their schooling, or had never had enough of it. They would make grand priests if only . . . The difficulty lay in the conditional clause, "If only some method could be devised to enable them to brush up their studies." Father Edmund Lester, S.J., took up their cause with energy and enthusiasm. In 1919 he set aside an old Victorian mansion at Osterley, changed its name to Campion House (in honour of Blessed Edmund Campion, the first Jesuit to die for the Faith at Tyburn) and started with nine "late vocations." Others soon followed, and a stable and coach-house were converted into a dormitory called Bethlehem. As the number of applicants increased, extra accommodation had to be improvised and we have been improvising ever since, to keep pace with the growing demand.

Up to date 772 of those who started at Osterley have reached the priesthood, 393 in the pastoral clergy and 379 in the religious orders, including the foreign missions. Some of them are now working in Kansas City; Lead, Oklahoma; San Diego, and Richmond, Virginia.

Evidently what was started as an emergency experiment has now come to supply a permanent need in the organization of the Church.

At present we have 140 students in residence in widely scattered improvised buildings. The time has come to stop improvising and to erect a permanent building. The paramount need is a permanent chapel. A noble structure has been designed and when Blessed Edmund Campion is canonized it will be dedicated to him. A permanent college too is needed, containing dormitories, class rooms, common rooms, and library, to accommodate 140 residential students during a two-year course in English, Latin, Greek, French, World History, and Elocution. We already have an adequate kitchen and refectory, thanks to the unfailing generosity of Catholics throughout the British Commonwealth, the United States, and Ireland, and of some non-Catholics, too. A scheme for raising $750,000 has been launched, and already $21,000 has come in.

If you would like to contribute to this fund, you will be helping the whole Church, because Campion House prepares students for all dioceses and all religious orders and for the foreign missions. You will be helping posterity too, because, although late vocations will always be in a minority in the Church, the need for more and more priests all over the world is becoming greater each year.

Don't send more than $1,000; otherwise we might become too rich and a wealthy clergy is a danger, as it was in England just before the Reformation. Don't send less than a dollar, because it is uneconomic to despatch smaller sums by post.

We have the land; we have the plans; we have the men. We are only waiting for you to say the word, "Go".

CLEMENT TIGAR, S.J.
CAMPION HOUSE
Osterley, Isleworth
Middlesex, England

THIS WEEK

Week by Week 327

The Crib and the Throne
by John Whitney Evans 331

Castro and Mexico
by Lawrence T. King 334

Return to Paris
by Helene Iswolsky 337

Man and Boy: A Poem
by Eamon Flynn 339

Pride and Prejudice
by John Cogley 340

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 341

Books 342

Sabbath: A Poem
by Sister M. Davida, I.H.M. 344

Records: Varieties of Beethoven
by Don Wooten 346

THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
RICHARD HORCHLER

Drama Critic: RICHARD HAYES; *Movie Critic:* PHILIP T. HARTUNG; *Paris:* ROBERT BARRAT; *Rome:* GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN; *Great Britain:* MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Second-class postage paid at Orange, Conn. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly, except biweekly during July and August, at 440 Post Road, Orange, Conn., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685.

Copyright © 1960 The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.

U.S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢
Printed at the Wilson H. Lee Co., Orange, Conn.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

AT LAST, THE CLIMAX?

CHARLES DE GAULLE is not unused to crisis and danger, but the task he has set himself now is among the most perilous he has ever faced. As he returns to Paris, having been forced to cut short his travels through Algeria with his personal appeals for loyalty from the Army and trust from the Algerian Moslems, everything he has worked for hangs in the balance.

If the *colons* succeed in winning over significant elements of the Army, if the Moslem population does not rally to his plea for a Yes vote in the forthcoming referendum, if F.L.N. leaders go along with extremist pressure and reject the "middle road" opened up by de Gaulle—then the Algerian agony will continue and even grow worse. And if that should happen, the direst consequences threaten the Gaullist regime itself, the stability of North Africa, the credit of the West among the emergent nations of Africa and Asia, the continued endurance of the Western alliance, the very balance of strength between the Communist and free nations.

If the latest of de Gaulle's great gambles should succeed, however, then the prospects for peace in Algeria—with all it will mean for France, Africa, the West and indeed the world—will be brighter than at any time in the six long years that this tragic war has raged.

Since he was prevailed upon to take the leadership of a nation in danger of disintegrating, almost three years ago, President de Gaulle has moved with a deliberation that is maddening to his critics. In the face of riots and demonstrations at home, pressure at the U.N., and a steady climb in the rebellion's awful toll in death and suffering, he has clung to his own purposes alone. It may be that the General has deluded himself with impossible dreams for his beloved France; it may be that he is guilty of what he has publicly scorned in the *colons*—their "devotion to outdated slogans." But it must be conceded that he has shown himself to be an astonishingly shrewd politician, as well as a dedicated and lofty-visioned leader of his people.

THERE is no doubt that President de Gaulle's first purpose is the well-being of France and the restoration of *la gloire* as a force in the lives of Frenchmen. Toward the accomplishment of that goal he has taken steps which seem inimical to the purposes of the West as a whole. Chief among these steps is his insistence that France become a nuclear power in her own right, and this at a time when all nations, with the major exception of Communist China, are devoting themselves to a search for ways and means of nuclear arms limitation, if not disarmament. Other areas in which the General has worked at cross purposes with the leaders of the other Western powers have to do with the reestablishment of the wartime Big Three, with consequent weakening of the NATO organization; France's role in NATO and her contributions toward the maintenance of NATO forces; the degree of French cooperation with the plans for European economic unity.

Even in the management of his affairs at home, the General's methods have prompted large misgivings. He has resorted increasingly to press censorship and harassment of his critics, to procedures of opinion-molding and enforcement that are repugnant to democratically-minded observers both in France and overseas. And for all his patience and his strategy in dealing with the *colons* and their supporters in France, he has been able to achieve only the shakiest control over these extremists.

Algeria itself, of course, remains the biggest source of dissatisfaction with de Gaulle, in and out

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of France. While he has been working for his own solution—a cease-fire first, and only then arrangements for free elections in Algeria—the situation there has grown more difficult by the day. The F.L.N. has turned more openly toward China and the U.S.S.R., both of which have offered the rebels "unconditional aid," and many of the rebel group's leaders seem less rather than more disposed to settle for anything less than full recognition as a *de facto* government. France's friends at the U. N. find it increasingly difficult to dissuade the delegates from strong action—difficult both in terms of votes and in terms of their own relations with the all-important Afro-Asian states.

Finally, while de Gaulle has been shaping the necessary "judgment of France," the bloodshed has gone on. Even apart from any questions of atrocities and torture, the statistics available convey horror enough. Conservative sources estimate that French losses have been more than 10,000 killed, rebel military losses about 150,000 killed, and civilian deaths about 150,000. The rebels maintain that as many as a million civilian Algerians have been killed.

Granting all these things, however, it is still not easy to condemn what Charles de Gaulle has done. The problems he inherited were all but impossible —a government in chaos, a people mortally divided, a war in being that promised tragedy no matter how it was decided. That de Gaulle has brought France and Algeria this close to a possible resolution of the stalemate—without in the process destroying either France or Algeria—is in itself almost miraculous, and criticism of his actions must take this fact into account.

Whatever disagreement one may have had with the de Gaulle policies, past and present, the strength, courage and integrity of the man cannot be denied. Now, as he puts his Algerian gamble to the great test, we can only hope that events will prove him right, for the sake of the Algerian people, for France, for Africa, for the sake of peace throughout the world.

THE PRESIDENT AND HIS CABINET

FOR SEVERAL weeks now, President-elect Kennedy has been regarded more as a Cabinet-maker than anything else. For the Cabinet he selects is rightly regarded as the first real, tangible evidence of what the new Kennedy Administration will be. And, with the expertise of a dramatist of suspense, John F. Kennedy has been naming his appointments at irregular intervals, holding large important posts until the end, so that each announcement has received maximum attention.

Although his Cabinet appointments are far from complete at this point, the nature of his appointments is becoming clear enough to warrant some tentative judgments. And with the selection of Dean Rusk for the important post of Secretary of State, idle speculation about "Who?" can turn to less idle speculation about "What policies?"

Dean Rusk served in State Department posts for six years and was Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs at the time of the Korean conflict. In this post he made the kind of decisions, in a limited area admittedly, that can be expected of a Secretary of State. In his present capacity as President of the Rockefeller Foundation and as a participant in the Rockefeller reports he has continued to address his attention to broad problems of foreign policy. He is generally regarded as a good administrator and a sound, rigorous thinker. His appointment will probably be accepted with little disturbance except at the extreme ends of the political spectrum, for Dean Rusk has supporters in both "liberal" and "conservative" groups, and his competence will probably be admitted even by those who would have preferred another choice.

Among those who may be disturbed because they clearly preferred another man are those who have continued to support Adlai Stevenson beyond the point of loyalty—and sensible expectation. But even they will probably be pleased that Mr. Stevenson has agreed to accept the Ambassadorship to the U.N. It would be a major loss if the Presidential campaign had cost this Administration—and the country—the services of so devoted and talented a person as Adlai Stevenson. There can be little doubt that his abilities will be effective and appreciated within the U.N.

What is being increasingly discussed as a triumvirate is completed with the welcome appointment of Chester Bowles as Under Secretary of State. In addition to his varied experience as Governor of Connecticut, Ambassador and Congressman, Mr. Bowles will bring to the office a sustained and thoughtful interest in foreign policy.

As for lesser appointments to the Cabinet—Abraham A. Ribicoff, Governor of Connecticut, as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare; Luther Hodges, Governor of North Carolina, as Secretary of Commerce; Stewart L. Udall, Democratic Congressman from Arizona, as Secretary of the Interior—these have generally been accepted with restrained praise or mild criticism.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The worst that can be said is that they do not give evidence of the truly distinguished Cabinet that had been hoped for. A more favorable judgment is that these men have undeniable talent and that behind a strong Executive they will function effectively.

Clearly, Senator Kennedy has left no doubt that he intends to be a strong, vigorous Executive, dealing directly with department heads. It is also clear that even in the early days of his Administration he will need all the effective support he can rally. Although President Eisenhower welcomed him cordially, and there promises to be a friendly shift of administrative responsibilities, many influential Republicans are already training their heavy guns on the President-elect. The first hundred days, when the new President normally has a better chance of achieving his purposes than at any other time, promise rough weather for John F. Kennedy. He will need all the support he can gain from his new appointments to the Cabinet.

COMMUNIST PROGRAM

THE DECLARATION by the international Communist party meeting recently in Moscow and the shorter manifesto, December 11, on the "world-wide struggle in defense of peace," provide new glimpses of the immediate prospect. If these statements explicitly recognize the wholesale destructiveness of modern war and appear to tend in a Soviet rather than a Chinese direction on the question of resort to war as a means to revolution, they are highly militant in tone. The competition envisaged in "peaceful coexistence" is hardly to be confined to such matters as volume of production, scientific achievement, educational progress and, eventually, living standards. Communist competition is to be much more active than that. It involves instigation and support of the forces of social and political change throughout the world. And under certain circumstances resort to arms is foreseen as necessary in order to bring Communism to power in some countries.

The statements call for an all-out battle against the capitalist world and its principal defender, the United States. In this struggle every weakness of the West must be exploited, all available forces utilized for what they are worth in the march toward world Communism. Party members are enjoined to capitalize on the resentment of the downtrodden, the destitute and the neglected everywhere. Labor unions must be sustained in all their demands and encouraged to make them stiffer. Social Democrats should get strong support. Colonial peoples seeking their independence must be backed to the hilt, even though the new countries that emerge under a banner of "independent national democracy" at first assign a negligible if any role to the local Communist party.

This represents more of a definition of current policy than any new departure, but it comes at a time when it could have wide repercussions. It cannot help but serve as a spur to the peoples of Africa who are already in a state of turmoil. It will have effects in Algeria and the Congo, in the Portuguese colonies and in the Union of South Africa, where a white minority is desperately trying to maintain and strengthen its foolhardy policy of "apartheid." At this moment there are also plenty of other trouble spots around the globe. There are, for example, continuing tensions between the Israelis and the Arab world, the fight for the control of Laos, the precarious situations of South Korea and South Vietnam. In our own hemisphere the Castro pattern threatens to be repeated in other Latin American countries where poverty, economic exploitation by foreign companies and domestic political tyranny are building up determination to revolt.

Soviet and Chinese subversive forces have plenty of injustice, discrimination and neglect to exploit in the world. Whether they succeed in utilizing all the resulting resentments to further their own ambitions of world domination depends largely on the reactions of others. To what extent will the peoples of the underveloped lands actually believe in the sincerity of Soviet professions of wholehearted support for their highly justifiable aspirations? How will the business and political leaders in those various countries react to growing demands for such objectives as decent living standards and civil liberties? Finally, how is the United States going to react to this appeal and the renewed Communist espousal of the cause of the disinherited of the world?

One thing these pronouncements make plain is that, for all our exalted living standards, we Americans are in for a difficult time of it. This is no case of idle talk. Foreign aid on the scale required to meet the need will not be possible without substantial monetary sacrifices. But aid is only one of the essentials. We must also attempt anew the most difficult feat of all, that of presenting convincingly to the uncommitted peoples of the world the advantages (despite all defects) of a free society such as ours. An effective answer to the Communist

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

challenge must embody as well a genuine interest in the ways and aspirations of other peoples to a degree that so far has proved beyond us.

A QUESTION OF BIGOTRY

THE EFFECT of the "religious issue" on the Presidential election continues to arouse considerable interest. As we interpret the results, there is considerable room for differences of opinion on the subject for at least two reasons. First of all, Senator Kennedy's religion seems to have hurt him in some regions, but it helped in others. Secondly, detailed figures on Catholic support for Senator Kennedy are now becoming available, but one large and perhaps unanswerable question remains: would those Catholics who abandoned their traditional Democratic loyalty in 1952 and 1956 to vote for Mr. Eisenhower have returned to the Democrats this year whether or not the Democratic candidate was a Catholic?

Other important questions remain unanswered. One out of every four normally Democratic Protestants this year switched to Vice President Nixon: did this switch hurt Senator Kennedy more than his gain in Catholic votes helped him? Jewish voters, again according to Mr. Gallup, went heavily Democratic in the recent election, giving Senator Kennedy considerably heavier support than they gave Adlai Stevenson in 1952 and 1956. Was this because of or in spite of Mr. Kennedy's Catholicism? Was it because Jewish voters liked Mr. Kennedy more or because they liked Mr. Nixon less?

Questions like these remain to be explored, and analysis of the whole subject by the political scientists is likely to continue for a long time to come. For our part, we are not "afraid" of any conclusion that a heavy majority of Catholics supported a fellow-Catholic in order to see Senator Kennedy become the first Catholic President of the United States. We agree with those political scientists who say that a member of any minority group in the population will receive substantial support from members of his own group when there is a chance that he will become "the first" to achieve this or that elective office. We see no reason to expect Catholics to be different on this score, and we said before the election that we expected Senator Kennedy to win a heavy Catholic vote. We hardly need to add, however, that if any group continued to vote along racial or religious lines after the first breakthrough had been made, this would be bloc voting of a dangerous type.

But what about those who vote against a man simply because of his race or religion? We would have thought this a point on which there would be little disagreement, but apparently we were wrong. David Lawrence, for example, has written about the "religious issue" several times, sometimes leaving us puzzled about the direction of his comments. But a statement by him in a recent column in the N.Y. *Herald Tribune* is clear enough—to our mind, painfully clear.

Readers have asked him, Mr. Lawrence writes, why it is regarded as "bigotry" for Protestant Democrats to have voted against Senator Kennedy because of his religion, yet it is not called bigotry when Catholics turned from the Republican party to vote for their co-religionist. We did not expect Mr. Lawrence to try to explain why even Catholic Republicans might be inclined to vote for a "first" Catholic President, although we think the minority group reaction involved is taken largely for granted by political scientists. But we were nonetheless surprised with Mr. Lawrence's answer, which we consider one of the most startling to come out of the entire campaign.

"The question answers itself," Mr. Lawrence wrote. "It really isn't bigotry to vote for or against a man because of his religion any more than it is to vote for or against him because he is a conservative or a radical." This, we think, is incredible nonsense. Whether a man is a conservative or a liberal is completely relevant to the question of his fitness for public office, as are his views on any matter of public policy. But by common consent a man's religion is not considered relevant to his fitness for office, and Article VI of the Constitution specifically forbids any religious test for public office in the United States. In our opinion, voting against any candidate for office because of his religion—simply because he is a Protestant, or because he is a Catholic, or because he is a Jew—violates the letter and the spirit of the Constitution. And we continue to think, Mr. Lawrence to the contrary, that any man who votes in his fashion is guilty of bigotry, unless words are to lose their meaning entirely.

In our September 30 issue we announced that John Cogley was serving as special assistant to Senator John F. Kennedy during the Presidential campaign and that he would discontinue his "Here and There" column until the elections were over. We are pleased now to announce that Mr. Cogley has resumed writing and that his first column since the election appears in this issue.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Crib and the Throne

Our primary concern must be the redemption of the world now and its deliverance at the end of time

by JOHN WHITNEY EVANS

THE CHRISTMAS SEASON has in recent years increasingly become a time for examination of conscience. This is evidenced in part from the many billboards and auto bumpers which admonish us to "Keep Christ in Christmas," and thereby suggest that we have not. Our apprehensions feed also upon the stale falsism, "Christmas is a children's holiday." And another source of annoyance and reflection is provided by the cloying repetition of familiar Christmas songs, played in season and out of season, done and redone, over and over again; and also by the cynical grinding out of new fare which is ostensibly intended to enhance our awareness of the holiday season. Monotony lowers us into boredom, from whence we sometimes rebound to ask with vexation, "What is it all for, anyhow?"

Under the impetus of the liturgical movement and family magazines, home observances have tended to gravitate toward the Advent Wreath, the Jesse Tree, and the crèche. Sometimes even the traditionally decorated pine has become excluded, or at least held in reserve until the wee hours of Christmas morning, when it fittingly blazes forth as a symbol of the Light which has appeared. In some instances the crusades have set off reactions which their leaders did not anticipate. Certain sensitive souls have questioned the propriety of the slick Trappist food advertisements, or the cheese notice which invited the readers of a popular Catholic weekly to "put the 'mmmmmmm' into Christmas this year." Others have wondered at the presence of nativity scenes on court house lawns and Christmas pageants and programs in public schools. Have these aroused discomfort, or, perhaps, even resentment in the hearts of His chosen people? One can recall the observation of a famous rabbi to the effect that, at Christmas, it is not the faith of the Jews which is on trial. It is the charity of Christians.

My purpose is not to list all the examples of a more religious observance of the Nativity, nor to offer an explanation of why such a revival may be taking place. It is simply to note that if we are growing in the conviction that Christmas is a time not only for candy and carols and cribs, but also for scrutiny of conscience, then the various crusades have entered their most constructive phases. I think that to point a righteous finger at the commercialized observances of the world is no longer our main task. Rather, it is now for us to examine our own spirit in the celebration of Christmas. I am not referring to the obvious contradiction incarnated in an opulent, stuffed commemoration of the birth of Him who had nowhere to lay His head. I am challenging the deeper misconception which, with all reverence and sincerity, emphasizes the First Coming of the Savior but neglects to take account of His full role as Messianic Deliverer: Christmas is a portent of the Second Coming, the first having already taken place. During this sacred season our primary concern must be the redemption of the world now and its deliverance at the end of time. The truth of this assertion can be seen from an examination of the liturgy, and from a reflection on the unsettled times in which we live.

ANYONE who long ago read Dom Guéranger's analysis of the triple coming of Christ at Christmas realized that the feast held many more riches than we usually profited from. More popular works in recent years have corrected some of his findings and have more clearly indicated, by underlining the patristic and liturgical awareness of the parousial orientation, the direction that the liturgical themes pursue during the autumn and winter months.

These themes of visitation, judgment, deliverance and consummation are first introduced softly in the Alleluia verse for the Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost. They are heard in their initial full statement during the Introit for the following week, when the Gospel of the Wedding Feast and its suddenly appearing King

Father Evans teaches at Cathedral Senior High School in Duluth, Minnesota.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

provides them with a significant variation on the idea of preparedness. Their presence is next felt throbbing through the great Exile Mass of the Twentieth Sunday. They sound forth more fully as a setting which underscores the discharge of spiritual accounts in the Twenty-first Sunday. Then they are impressionistically dispersed throughout the summation of salutary duties which dominates the Mass of Caesar's Tribute in the following week, only to stand forth strongly again in the hopeful Deliverance Mass of the Twenty-third Sunday, which foretells the resurrection of the body. They attain the height of their carefully prepared crescendo in the crashing apotheosis of the Twenty-fourth Sunday, when the earth trembles, the stars fall, and the walls of matter melt in anticipation of the vision of Him Who is to come.

Violence, however, does not bring repose in art; similarly, the liturgy, ever leading us to the Great Rest of God, does not end its autumnal symphony here. The momentum of the concluding Pentecostal Sundays thrusts the major themes forward into Advent. On the First Sunday their cataclysmic message rings out again, an echo, a restatement. And now, throughout the subsequent Sundays, the triple-voiced counterpoint set up by the interplay of plaintive Hebrew longing, pointing Baptist and arriving Messias surges upward through them with a compelling vigor which builds and develops until—as if a new tonality has been discovered or a new key necessitated—they are transposed into a quiet, spacious setting for the announcement in the First Mass of Christmas: "The Grace of God Our Savior has appeared among us." St. Paul urges us to live justly, "looking for the blessed hope and coming of the glory of the Great God."

The vitality of the liturgical development will not permit undue lingering over the historical connotations of the Nativity Feast. On it presses through the Masses of Christmas Day and of the Octave until the Introit for the Mass of the Epiphany announces, "Behold, the Lord, the Ruler has come," and the Offertory responds, "and all the kings of the earth shall adore Him." Here the various motifs have converged into their final climactic statement. The day of the Second Appearance, of ultimate submission, has come. The liturgy anticipates the final return of all things under the headship of Christ and their deliverance back to the Father. The themes of visitation and culmination, now predominant, gradually fade into their final serene cadences in the Masses after the Epiphany. Only when the stern note of Septuagesima Sunday sounds do we realize that the cycle begun months ago has finally passed. The liturgy now wishes to lead our thoughts and hearts in another direction.

Anyone who has grown familiar with the popular division of the missal and the breviary will object that the view just proposed takes no account of the "Liturgical Year" which ends on the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost and begins with the First Sunday of Advent. Further, it seems to ignore the Old Testament spirit of waiting and yearning which the carefully selected Advent texts so readily engender in us.

However, if we will remember that the "Liturgical Year" has no rubrical sanction, and that its popular divisions are supported by no historical data of a definitive nature, we shall be led to the very proper conclusion that whatever is presented through the unfolding of the Church's sacramental time is not to be confused with the recalling of historical events nor divided into common temporal sequences. Indeed, it is only under this view that the Orations, Epistles and Gospels for the Masses after the Epiphany can be inserted from year to year for the sake of convenience into the post-Pentecostal cycle without upsetting the liturgical development.

It is true that the liturgy acts in time and with reference to two factual events, the First Coming and the Second. But it exists neither to commemorate the past nor to foretell the future. Its purpose is to sanctify the present. This it does by drawing upon the factual data of the past for their symbolic worth and referring to the obscurely represented future events of the parousia—selecting, combining, interpreting and applying these in order to carry on in the present moment a particular phase of the gradual recapitulation of all things in Christ. With the movement of the liturgical season thus unobstructed by literally conceived events or times, it can be seen more clearly that, as Pius Parsch and others have demonstrated, "Advent is really a continuation of the Church's autumn season . . . Christmas and Epiphany are one great feast oriented to the parousia."

THE SECOND great point is that to dwell on the Second Coming at Christmas is especially appropriate for our age. We must understand from the first that this does not constitute an appeal for the rejection of the simple beauty of the historical commemoration of Christ's birth and all the genuine value that this can have for us. It is, rather, a plea for a reassessment of our observance, for a recapturing of the social awareness which moved St. Francis to inaugurate the nativity custom from which our own often elaborate, often sentimental adaptations derive. The Poverello had visited the Holy Land and later the desire to recreate the scene at Bethlehem grew in him. In 1223 he called upon his benefactor, John Velitta, to set up in a cave near the monastery at Fonte Colombo a manger filled with hay, flanked by an ox and ass, "just as at Bethlehem." He said that he wished "for once to keep the coming of the Son of God upon earth seriously and to see with my own eyes how poor and weak He wished to be for our sake." That Francis was seeking not a place of solitude for sterile contemplation was

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

evident from the spirit he evinced. "If I knew the emperor," he once said, "I would ask him to proclaim that on Christmas day . . . the rich should feast the poor." Following St. John, who wrote, "If God has so loved us, we also must love one another," Francis' historical reconstruction was meant to fuel the fire of brotherly love. It is clear that this must be so today, that to use the crib as a decoration, and not also as a demand for greater sacrifice in behalf of others, is to perpetrate a gross distortion of the Christmas Mystery.

We must, however, reflect that the milieu in which we celebrate this Mystery is far different from that of the thirteenth century. At the risk of oversimplification, we can note that the era of Francis was felt to be one in which the Providence of the loving Father presided over an ordered world, the finished product of His omnipresent care. Within the harmonious frame of things disclosed by philosophers and theologians, men and society passed through their accustomed patterns. While not altogether devoid of ambition or free from conflict (witness the vicious warfare between princes and popes), the men and their times were disturbed by little of the upheaval of practices and institutions we have grown accustomed to. And though Christianity attempted to press its boundaries further north and east through missionary effort, and tried to reclaim other territory through five hapless crusades, its heartland was isolated from the rest of the world. World problems as such were nonexistent in the minds of its adherents. Even the internal contortions occasioned by the Albigensies and Waldensies only afforded the Faith an increase in its cohesive strength.

By comparison, our times seem almost diametrically opposed. In the minds of many, fate or chance or the calculus of probabilities has replaced a loving Providence. We have turned to the startling findings of astro-physics and geology to learn that the very fabric of our world is far from finished. We have seen the theories of physical evolution transferred to human and social phenomena. Only recently the *Scientific American* proposed at length the thesis that man now view himself not only as the terminus of forces once beyond his control, but also as a being capable both of determining his own somatic and psychic development, and of drawing upon his wonderful technology to direct the evolutionary forces of the world to serve himself. Christianity is now neither unified nor isolated. Its divided members are confronted (with no common ground in Natural Law upon which to stand) by such moral and physical terrors as radiological and bacteriological warfare; such simultaneously doctrinaire and brutal ideologies as atheistic Communism and racist nationalism; such clamorous and as yet imponderable arrivals as automation, depth psychology, cybernetics and molecular medicine; such churning urgencies as the explosive expectations of the have-not peoples of the world, whatever their color or continent.

Beset, alarmed, both exalted and confused by these things, and a hundred more, the Christian who is willing to face the times seems forced ultimately to take one of two positions. He may come to regard the world and its people as a vast, complex, turbulent, loosely planned, uncontrollable continuum of free and random factors. Or he may see that the world is a bruised and unfinished masterpiece, and that God has placed in the puny heads and hands of man far more of the ordered and ordering work of Providence than he ever imagined.

IT IS from this welter that the concept of Christ's ultimate visitation and deliverance of the world emerges to make imperative the return to the earlier traditions regarding Christmas. All of the forces of nature, all of the talents of men, all of the achievements of both are to be brought under the headship of Christ. In the end, a creation renewed from the Fall and at last fulfilled shall be returned to the Father by His Son. As members of this Son's Body, we must carry on the rebuilding and sanctifying of the world against the day of final consummation. We shall do this by meeting the imperious social, technological, political, economic, and religious developments of our times—meeting them and exploiting their fruits as concerned Christians. The messianic vocation of Christ's Mystical Body imposes upon us in justice and charity the furtherance of the better world in which men can be free of the worst of hunger, disease, prejudice, ignorance and tyranny. And by liberating the world from these evils as best we can, we liberate the spirit of man for the enjoyment of beauty, the awareness of truth, and the acceptance of Faith, the true messianic redemption.

How, at Christmas, can we condition ourselves to receive most fruitfully the grace that will fortify us for such encounters? We can do so, to be sure, beside the crib, as we kneel and meditate on how much the Father cared, and how much we must care. We can do so more effectively by standing before the empty throne, the symbol of the Second Coming of His Son. For the liturgy offers grace in and for the present moment, and to receive most beneficially the grace of this present

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moment in 1960 demands a mentality which looks eagerly through the writhing events of our times to the day of consummation, and impresses us deeply with the truth that we must get to work and capture our share of the world in preparation. The Son of Man, in His Day, will sit upon the empty throne we contemplate and ask each of us to hand over our portion.

And if we fear that anticipation of the end of the world will tend to undercut our social awareness or to weaken our determination, we have but to remember the lesson taught by the life of Gregory the Great. If ever there lived a man who saw the gloomy forebodings of Armageddon written in sooty letters on the sordid events of his times, it was he. Still, as if the very future of the Kingdom of God for centuries was poised in the balance, he toiled without surcease. He saw only the end, but he worked as if it were but the beginning. And, indeed, it was, for the Middle Ages and much that the Modern Age can trace to them as the era of initial gropings were built upon Gregory. If we could have but one spark of his flaming awareness of the meaning of time, one part of the energy which he put forth to further the inevitable recapitulation, surely we would hear the voices of the Ascension mingling with the Glorias of Bethlehem: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand there gazing. . . . He will come again."

TWO REVOLUTIONS

Castro and Mexico

by LAWRENCE T. KING

REVOLUTION in Guatemala, rebel attacks on Nicaragua, bloody rioting in Venezuela, student demonstrations in Mexico—all bear frightening witness to Fidel Castro's impact upon Latin America. The failure of our State Department to grasp the significance of the revolutionary tide which is sweeping Latin America, of which Castro is merely a single manifestation, has created a dangerous vacuum in American hemispheric policy. Events of the past few months now indicate that the Cuban revolutionary leader, with the willing assistance of Moscow, is determined to fill that vacuum.

Apparently Washington has grown so accustomed to political revolutions in the republics to the south—seizures of government power by military juntas interested only in furthering their own personal ambitions—that it has failed to recognize the intensity of Latin America's current social ferment for what it really is: a radical, social protest against prevailing economic and political systems which, despite constantly increasing wealth and productivity, have not been able to raise living standards to any appreciable degree. Witness the fact that per capita income in Latin America today is less than $200 a year, compared to $2,000 in the United States.

Cuba, of course, provides the classic example of our misinterpretation of the revolutionary currents sweeping Latin America. In our reliance on "official" Havana sources that Castro would never come to power, we completely overlooked the strength of the anti-Batista feeling among Cubans themselves. And when Castro did come to power, we were caught off guard again, this time by our failure to anticipate the nature and extremity of his revolutionary program.

At the present time, Castro is keeping Washington on edge with his charges and countercharges in the United Nations, his seizure of American-owned industries without any visible sign of compensation and his campaign of provocation against the U.S. naval base at Guantanamo. In our preoccupation with these immediate considerations, there is a distinct danger that we may neglect the urgent necessity of effecting adequate measures to counter Castro's efforts to capture the revolutionary movements stirring throughout Latin America.

At last summer's meeting of the Organization of American States in San José, Costa Rica, the United States succeeded in gaining unanimous approval—after the emissaries of Cuba and the Dominican Republic walked out—of a resolution condemning Communist interference in the Western Hemisphere. All U.S. efforts, however, for a direct condemnation of Cuba itself met with icy silence on the part of the Latin representatives, who knew only too well that Castro's open defiance of the "Colossus of the North" had made him somewhat of a hero among large segments of their own people.

The meeting at San José posed an especially delicate situation for the Mexican representatives. They realized that any hasty condemnation of Cuba would create

---

Mr. King, a newspaperman in California, is a frequent contributor to The Commonweal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

serious repercussions at home where President Adolfo Lopez Mateos is beset by pro-Castro forces within his own party and by the necessity of retaining the confidence of American interests on which he depends for the capital investments needed to carry out his administration's domestic program. Mexico, then, provides an ideal focal point to assess the impact of Castroism upon Latin America and how this country is meeting the challenge.

ON THE SURFACE, there are many similarities between the Castro upheaval and the Mexican revolution of 1910, which gave birth to the political party which has been ruling the country ever since. From 1910 to 1940, Mexico's revolutionary leaders fought a bitter series of skirmishes with American interests over nationalization of foreign holdings—notably in the fields of oil, land and minerals. There was the wholesale confiscation of land and property belonging to Mexican citizens and the long and bitter persecution of the Church, culminating in the expropriation of all Church property and the expulsion of foreign missionaries. And there was also that period—during the administrations of Plutarco Calles and Lazaro Cardenas —when the revolution took on a decided Moscow-orientation.

With this background in mind, it is not difficult to understand the strong affinity that exists between Mexico's old-line revolutionists and Castro. At the same time, however, there is a significant point of departure. Despite its brief ideological flirtation with Communism, Mexico—unlike the present regime in Cuba—never compromised its course of action by getting entangled in power blocs. Thus when it was suggested at the San José meeting that Cuba was merely following Mexico's example, the Mexican foreign minister, Dr. Manuel Tello, angrily reminded the Cuban delegates that his country's revolution preceded the Communist revolution in Russia by seven years and that at no time did the revolutionary leaders of his country seek military or economic aid outside the hemisphere.

Dr. Tello's spirited defense of the Mexican revolution reveals the curious revolutionary syndrome that afflicts

virtually everyone who occupies an official position in Mexico today. Actually, Cardenas, who went out of office in 1940, was the last real revolutionary president Mexico has had. Paradoxically, since 1940 the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party has been moving gradually to the right, although every office-holder—from the mayor of the smallest village to the president himself—finds it necessary on each anniversary of the 1910 revolt to assure the electorate that they are advancing the cause of the revolution. Adherence to the principles of the revolution is as necessary to political success in Mexico as is affirmation of the U.S. Constitution for an office-seeker north of the border.

The soft-pedaling of Mexico's revolutionary program by Cardenas' successors has not been motivated by any great change in political orientation but rather by economic and political realism. Under Avila Comacho, repressive action against the Church was ended (although anti-Church laws have never been repealed, no recent Mexican president has ever sanctioned their enforcement). Under Miguel Aleman, the close ties that existed between government and organized labor, which had become increasingly susceptible to Communist influence and a growing threat to political stability, were severed, and a concerted program was begun to attract foreign investments under mutually advantageous terms. Under Luis Ruiz Cortines, industrialization was intensified with the aid of foreign capital, and a gigantic program of public works was inaugurated. Today, Lopez Mateos is determined to push these programs to fulfillment. In a recent statement to an American newsman, he wrote:

"The Constitution places on the state the obligation of raising the living standards of the inhabitants, of carrying out vast and far-reaching agrarian reform, of promoting public education and insuring that workers' rights are respected. After establishing that land and waters are originally the nation's property, it adds that the nation has the right to transfer them to private parties, thus constituting private property. It indicates, unequivocally, that 'expropriations can be carried out in the public interest and through compensation.'

"Consequently, when I speak of the extreme left under the Constitution, this means that we will undertake to the best of our ability those improvements to which the poorest sections of our population, or those who need them most, are entitled according to the Constitution. But within the Constitution, extreme left also means—as I pointed out in my inaugural address —that 'we shall do nothing or allow anything to be done beyond or against our laws.' And the Constitution devotes its first chapter to individual rights which belong equally to Mexicans and foreigners and which are the foundation of the peace and order prevalent in the republic and of Mexico's economic and social development."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FROM THIS statement, it is clear that Lopez Mateos—like his immediate predecessors—is a political realist who is fully aware that his most important task as president is to raise the standard of living of his people. This he is doing by judiciously weighing the revolutionary program against its impact upon the Mexican economy. Thus has evolved Mexico's present mixed economy—one in which the administration is cautiously pushing its program of ultimate nationalization of basic industries on one hand and encouraging private investors to develop diversified business and industries on the other.

To many of the old-line revolutionists—of whom Cardenas is the leading spokesman—this approach smacks of conservatism and has come under severe criticism, especially since the advent of Castro. But there can be no question as to the wisdom of Lopez Mateos' policies for dealing with the many problems still besetting the country.

Take the problem of land reform, for example, which was pushed so vigorously under Calles and Cardenas. Since the beginning of the land reform of 1915, almost one hundred million acres of land has been redistributed to landless peasants. Most of this land, however, was located in semi-arid or in inaccessible regions and was unsuitable for cultivation in small units. The result was a serious decline in Mexican agricultural productivity which actually brought the country to the point of starvation and forced the government to deplete its dollar reserve for the importation of food and grain.

Only in recent years has Mexico achieved the self-sufficiency in food production that it had previously enjoyed. This has been accomplished, despite blasts from the extremists, by slowing down land expropriations and concentrating more on those programs designed to make the agrarian reform laws meaningful—construction of dams to generate electricity and provide irrigation water, agricultural experimentation to produce crops suitable for various regions, educational programs to train peasants in modern farming methods, the building of highways and railroads to provide farm-to-market access, the institution of banking systems to provide low-interest credit.

A program of this magnitude requires time, whereas revolutionists are always in a hurry, and heavy expenditure of government funds, which can come only from a healthy national economy. Mexico's present leaders have benefited from the mistakes of the past, and the fact that the Mexican economy has achieved greater gains under an Aleman or a Comacho or a Lopez Mateos than under a Calles or a Cardenas proves the wisdom of dealing with social and economic problems on the basis of realism rather than ideology. Nonetheless, this fact has not dimmed the ardor of the extremists, who still clamor for the earlier, headier revolutionary course of indiscriminate expropriation and large-scale nationalization despite the economic consequences.

So far, Lopez Mateos has been able to resist these pressures, and he is confident that a solid record of achievement will make the protests of Castro's proponents ineffectual. Last October, for example, he was able to announce to the Mexican people that one of the revolution's great goals, nationalization of the electric power industry, had been accomplished "within the framework of the nation's laws and with just compensation," an apparent slap at Castro's seizure of foreign-owned industries without offering any compensation.

Nationalization had been accomplished through successful negotiations with American & Foreign Power Co., which accepted the Mexican government's offer of one hundred and four million dollars for its plants and facilities, and through purchase of the controlling stock of the foreign-owned Mexican Light & Power Co. on the open market. As part of the A.&F.P.C. agreement, the company readily acceded to the stipulation that the purchase price of the concern be reinvested in other Mexican ventures. This vote of confidence in the Mexican economy is not based on mere altruism. The country's gross national product has increased seven per cent over the previous year, an achievement which would never have been possible without private foreign investments of more than a billion and a half, including more than one billion dollars from investors in the United States. Add to this another half-billion dollars a year brought into the country by American tourists, and you can readily understand why Lopez Mateos prefers to look northward rather than to Havana.

ALL THIS does not mean that Mexico's leaders are underestimating Castro's appeal to their own people. They are fully aware of the deep-seated anti-*Yanqui* feeling among Mexicans and the necessity of countering it with periodic assurances through the official party press that all foreign investments are rigidly controlled to keep "Mexico the master of its own destiny." At the same time, Castroism and the increased activity of Mexico's relatively small but active Communist Party, one of the forces behind the pro-Castro, anti-U.S. demonstrations last summer, have served to harden the government's opposition to Havana—and to Moscow, as well. They have also impressed upon Lopez Mateos the urgency of pushing ahead with his vigorous program of social and economic reform.

In the past six months, the administration has intensified its public housing program and is well on its way to setting a national record for the construction of housing units for low-income families. In addition, the government has announced completion of plans for an

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elaborate T.V.A.-type project to harness the Balsas River area, a project which will create the biggest lake in Latin America and provide water and power in a seven-state area. The program calls for creation of new population centers, the opening of hundreds of thousands of acres for resettlement of landless peasants, and a modern system of highways and roads through the area so as to provide a more ready access to Mexico City.

This far-reaching undertaking, to be financed completely by the government, is Lopez Mateos' answer to those critics who have tried to make political capital out of what they describe as the government's disinterest in agrarian reform. The system of land reform that has evolved in Mexico could well serve as a model for all of Latin America, and for the newly emerging countries of Asia and Africa as well.

In the early days of the Mexican revolution, there were attempts to apply Marxian principles and set up Soviet-type collective farms. This approach never found favor and was quickly abandoned in favor of a distinctly Mexican system of "*ejidos*" in which the land is communally owned and cooperatively worked. The peasant is given the land free, but if he ceases to work it for two straight years it reverts to the government and can be assigned to someone else. If the peasant remains on the *ejido* and works his portion he has the right to leave the land to his family after his death. This type of communal farm is a combination of the ancient Aztec agricultural pattern and the *ager publicus* system of Rome which was widely prevalent in medieval Spain.

The other system of land usage is called "private property colonization" in which Mexicans may acquire expropriated land and pay for it out of the proceeds of their labor. When it is completely paid for, the government surrenders full title to the land. In addition, purchase of private land and property is permitted, the only restriction being that land in excess of two hundred and fifty acres is subject to government expropriation, a restriction which is seldom enforced today but remains on the statute books to give the government a legal weapon to use to prevent unduly large land concentrations.

Just as a mixed industrial economy has developed under the aegis of the revolution, so too the flexibility of the agrarian reform movement demonstrates the wisdom of formulating programs to meet national needs on the basis of realism rather than ideology. As a result of this approach, Mexico has forged ahead of most of the other countries of Latin America in economic development. And in the process it has demonstrated that the best antidote to Castroism is a healthy awareness of the fact that if the movement for social and economic reform does not come from within it will come from without. Mexico has given every indication that it prefers its "institutionalized revolution" to the one directed from Moscow. It is a lesson our policy-makers might well ponder in our relations with all of Latin America.

TWENTY YEARS LATER

Return to Paris

by HELENE ISWOLSKY

RETURNING to a city after twenty years is like revisiting an old friend. First you are afraid—afraid of the change you are sure to find in him, and he in you. Then you are almost relieved to discover he has changed so little. Only later do you read in the familiar face the inevitable scars of time and sorrow.

Paris has not really changed so much, I said to myself, on my first walk through the streets I had last seen in 1940. Once more I saw its brilliance, its beautiful monuments and the parks where there played the same lovely children; the sidewalk cafés, with their patrons, forever at their ease; the bridges with their inevitable lovers silhouetted against the evening sky and the dramatic sunset. There were also the dazzling young women and their sleek escorts in sport cars, in the midst of the bewildering traffic of Champs Elysées. Yes, Paris was still the same.

And then I saw the scars—the memorial plaques for the war dead and the resistance-dead, with wreaths and humble little bouquets to mark where they had fallen. These were sharp reminders that Paris had been a prison, an execution place and a battlefield. And others soon came into focus—empty pedestals of monuments from which statues had been removed by the occupying Germans; empty sleeves of war-veterans, and sometimes empty trouser legs. One noticed incredibly old-fashioned, neatly mended clothes of aged

Miss Iswolsky is a frequent contributor. Her most recent book is *Christ in Russia*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

couples eating their lunch out of a paper-bag in the squares (no cafés for them); faces of young workers on their way to the plant, or coming home, on the bus: drawn, tired faces, grey from under-nourishment; pinched little faces of children who have known hardships since they were born and are still hungry, but won't admit it. There was sometimes lassitude, disillusion, even bitterness in these faces; but there was also forbearance and resolution to carry on. There is, in the Paris of the sixties, a kindness, and pity for others. Everybody seems to cooperate to make the other's burden lighter.

We have heard much about France's divisions, and they still exist to be sure. But we do not hear enough about the basic unity, the spiritual and cultural roots which keep the French together. It is the unity of a common experience of suffering accepted with endurance and charity.

We tend to think of the French as extreme individualists, and they are, or they would lose their identity. But in France today, each man and woman (except the minority on parade on the Champs Elysées) has somehow become keenly aware of his *neighbor*. There is between these men and women (from the working class to the white collar groups, from intellectual to clergy) an understanding, a reciprocity which to me was something new and stimulating. Every group is doing some kind of social work; every type of relief is organized under some political banner. Labor legislation is scrupulously observed, and paid vacations are not only enforced by law but facilitated by the cooperation of railroads and country and seaside resorts. A worker, an employee, a student can enjoy a trip at half-price, to France's most beautiful beaches; there are camps in areas previously reserved for rich café-society patrons only.

There is general agreement, too, concerning certain principles of social justice, human dignity and spiritual freedom not inscribed in legislation, but in the hearts of the French. Whenever such a principle is threatened, Frenchmen react with a unanimity which is quite surprising. François Mauriac, dean of Catholic writers and one of the senior members of the French Academy will manifest or sign petitions with Jean-Paul Sartre. Catholic and Protestant leaders, Jewish intellectuals and anti-clerical scientists will join hands and even rally a few Communists. This is neither a "popular-front," nor "fellow-traveler's" attitude. It is spontaneous and ephemeral, and ends as soon as the battle has been won—or lost.

IN THE various political and social groups, one often hears of men being *engagés, responsible* and *present* within the *community*." These are the four pillars which actually hold French constructive leadership together today.

I soon recognized in this pattern the fruit of seeds sown long ago. In fact, the modern concept of "engagement" first appeared under the pen of Emmanuel Mounier, founder of the Personalist Movement. He used the term long before contemporary existentialists took it up. Mounier also insisted that the human person must be responsible and present not only in his private life but also in the community.

Mounier died in 1950. His review *Esprit,* which I had known in its beginning, is still alive. I visited its editor, Jean-Marie Domenach in his office. It is located in an old building of the rue Jacob and is sheltered in a ramshackle annex with shaky stairs. These are the "poor means" advocated by Mounier. As in his days, the review discusses social, political, spiritual and artistic problems on the highest level. Shortly before my arrival, *Esprit* marked the tenth anniversary of Mounier's death. A memorial service was held for him by the eminent Jesuit scholar, Henri de Lubac. Already in 1951, another great Jesuit, Father Jean Daniélou wrote: "Emmanuel Mounier's death has been felt deeply not only by his friends but by the whole Church of France."

Father Daniélou is himself a man devoted to that revitalized Christianity of which Mounier was a precursor. Beside teaching at the Institut Catholique and working on his books, he is also director of the *Cercle Saint Jean Baptiste*. This is a student association especially concerned with the understanding and promotion of a true missionary ideal. In order to bring Christ to the nations, Father Daniélou teaches, you must first of all know and love them. Young men and women of many lands learn to know of each other under the auspices of the *Cercle*. And they learn to apply concepts of personalism to the burning questions of our very troubled times.

It is a well known fact that the Church of France has specially sought the ways and means to evangelize the masses. The famous statement of Pope Leo XIII in which he declared it a scandal that the Church of the nineteenth century lost the working class has weighed heavily on the mind of French Catholicism. Today, the search for the solution of this problem has become even more urgent because of the large contingent lost to the Church through Communism and because of the many atheist intellectuals and luke-warm Christians in the other parties. The idea that France is a *mission-land,* to be reclaimed and saved, like any other non-Christian area in the world, has sunk deep into French Catholic consciousness. Abbé Godin's heroic life, Abbé Michonneau's "revolution in the city parish," the *Mission de Paris,* the various secular institutes, Charles de Foucauld's Little Brothers and Sisters of the Poor—all these, together with the many groups of the lay-apostolate, have offered their own solution, brought their own devotion to a single great

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cause. Paris offers one the opportunity of watching these experiments at close range.

THE PRIEST-WORKERS have now disbanded but their spirit is still alive; it is shaping the French "missionary at home." This is especially true of the young parish clergy. They are now deeply aware that they participate in a tremendous task. I saw these young priests in the street; on foot, on bicycles and motorcycles. I saw their threadbare soutanes, their weather-beaten berets and wind-breakers, their lean, ascetic faces. At first they scarcely seemed real to me. It was as if they were created by the imagination of a Léon Bloy or a Bernanos. But I was soon to discover that they were very real and very much alive.

These priests' main preoccupation is to make themselves welcome among the people. The parish has frequently become so remote, so cold, it often serves only the well-to-do. It is as if an iron curtain has been drawn between the altar and the people. It is urgent not so much to bring these people back by persuasion, as to lift the curtain. The priest has first to gain their confidence, to be accepted. Then the people can come spontaneously and joyfully.

This change of heart is best exemplified in the church of Saint Severin, or the Saint Severin community as it likes to call itself. This is one of the oldest Parish churches. It is located near Notre Dame and not too far from the Sorbonne. It is the church of students and also of the poor, for some of the near-by streets are slums. Saint Severin itself is a beautiful shrine, of the most delicate Gothic architecture. Under one of its famous pillars, shaped as a palm-tree, the French writer Huysmans prayed on the eve of his conversion. Saint Severin was long considered as the church of the intellectual and artist, almost as a museum. But today it is throbbing with life, it is everyman's place of worship.

This is the result of the work of Abbé Francis Connan, the rector. He started his mission-life first in the suburban slums, then in a school for boys. He was finally called by Cardinal Feltin, Archbishop of Paris, to direct the parish of Saint Severin and to evangelize both the students and the poor. Thanks to Abbé Connan (the youngest rector in Paris), the iron curtain was raised. He called his parish a community and invited the faithful, and unbelievers too, to be engaged, responsible and present. The calendar of Saint Severin offers daily dialogue masses, daily evening masses and compline. The services are well attended and there are many communicants. But the unbelievers also come to the community center, because there is so much to do and see. There are meetings and conferences and dramatic performances in the parish house, and a lending library and a glee-club. And there is the yearly pilgrimage to Chartres Cathedral: some ninety miles on foot in three days, in complete silence, with Masses on the road. There are many other, less exhausting hikes and picnics and cheap excursions to holy shrines.

Abbé Francis Connan recently celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his elevation to the priesthood. In the parish bulletin at that time a friend of the Community wrote an article entitled: "The Priests Are With Us." And this article said: "If you understand our misery, the misery of all of us, Christians and non-Christians who live in your district, if you are obsessed by our world which has lost its joy because it is not Christian, if you feel that Christian joy should be given back to it, then, parish-priests you are with us!" A younger contributor wrote in the bulletin: "At Saint Severin they told us that laymen are also the Church. We were told not to sit back and admire Gothic architecture only, but to live the Mass as early Christians did."

This "revolution in the parish" is not the exclusive work of Saint Severin. I found it in many other churches, some of which also call themselves "communities." Yes, one may truly say, that the Church of France is *obsessed* by the problem of the laity, and has daily striven to reclaim it, by giving it back its dignity. No wonder then that the great Dominican preacher Father J. M. Carré devoted his 1960 lenten sermons at Notre Dame Cathedral to "The Priesthood of Laymen." Or that in his opening sermon, Father Carré quoted the words of St. Peter speaking to all Christians: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood."

MAN AND BOY

Widen the gap, Lord, and extend the lag
between the frenzy and the candid heart,
but now give Mary joy and bless the child
with five wits and question,
duty and daring,
pets and a playfellow,
woods and the wild things,
pippins and honey.

Detain the Easter and distract a while
the hammers on the hill of nailing, Lord,
but soon endow the man before the kiss
with homely instances,
the lucky hand of art,
tropes that strip the bones,
the mortal paradox,
the testament of love.

In the babe, Lord, seal oblivion of the beast
and mending of the mind, Lord, in the Christ.

EAMON FLYNN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

IN THE July 22, 1960 issue of The Commonweal, I wrote the first half of what I said would be a two-part article. At that time I was concerned about whether there would be special religious and ethnic appeals made during the Presidential campaign. The second column, to be written after the election, was to be a kind of score card, an evaluation of how well the candidates did in avoiding sectarian appeals.

As it happened, I was much closer to the campaign than I thought I would be when that column was written and I know enough now not to attempt any simple analysis. For the "religious issue" turned out to be very complex indeed.

As all the world knows by now, it worked both ways, helping and hurting both the candidates. Whatever Senator Kennedy lost through anti-Catholic bigotry was probably more than offset by the satisfaction his co-religionists felt in seeing him reach such eminence in American life. It was due not to anti-Protestant prejudice but to Catholic pride.

The Senator's appeal to Catholic voters was quite clearly enormous. Old-line Catholic Republicans remained true to their party, but Kennedy's appeal was too strong to help Nixon with the group who wandered off the New Deal reservation in 1952. I would say that the piddling Catholic support Richard Nixon got came from these traditional Republicans and a comparatively small number of unreconstructed McCarthyites, whose spokesmen were the *National Review* and Father Juniper Carol, the Franciscan who gained the dubious distinction of being the only Catholic priest to make a public statement on the election.

Can it be said that Senator Kennedy deliberately made a sectarian appeal to his fellow Catholics? I do not believe he had to. It was not necessary. Moreover, I do not believe he would have done so even if it did seem to be required. That simply is not his style.

There have been charges of course that the appearance before the Texas ministers, and the subsequent showing of the film on television, was a calculated appeal to Catholic voters. If that is true, the Catholic body has been greviously misjudged in recent years, for nothing said in the Houston speech could have been designed to curry sectarian favor. The Senator unequivocally supported separation of Church and State and the equality before the law of all religious bodies; he stated his clear-cut opposition to governmental aid for parochial schools and the appointment of a Vatican Ambassador; he voiced forthright disapproval of limitations on the rights of Protestants in Catholic countries.

If all this added up to a special appeal to Catholics, what happens to the P.O.A.U. thesis?

No, I believe that Kennedy followed the only course open to him. He met the religious attack head-on, stating candidly where he stood. In the Houston speech he said that he had no intention of appeasing either his Protestant critics by denying his faith or his Catholic critics by denying his views on the controversial subjects under discussion. I believe he meant what he said.

Vice-President Nixon took the only avenue open to him, too. He said nothing about the religious issue, except to deplore its existence. The Vice President of course had good reasons, practical as well as moral, for trying to keep the issue under wraps. Encouraging the anti-Catholics would not get him any votes he did not already have, while it would certainly alienate voters who might have ended up in his column. Denouncing the anti-Catholics in a hard-hitting statement might have strengthened his hand with Catholics but would certainly have alienated Democrats who threatened to leave the party for religious reasons.

I am sure the Vice-President was absolutely earnest in doing all he could to keep religion out of the campaign, for no one knew for sure just what part it would play in the voters' choice. But when Nixon suggested a cut-off date for all discussion of the issue, he must have known he was asking for the impossible. Senator Kennedy, against whom the charge of divided loyalty was being made, could hardly agree to shackle himself.

The two Vice-Presidential candidates were undoubtedly as conscious of the religious issue as the men at the top. Senator Johnson, traveling through the South, followed the Kennedy tactic of discussing it openly. Ambassador Lodge did not have much to say, but in raising the possibility of federal aid to parochial schools he made a more open bid for Catholic votes than Nixon was willing to go along with. That was about as close as we came to a special appeal, though there is no reason to believe Mr. Lodge was not serious.

So now it is all over, and what do I say in this second part of the July 22 column? Both candidates deserve an *A* for effort. Nixon as a non-Catholic had a certain appeal for anti-Catholics that he might not otherwise have had. I think he recognized it but I don't believe he exploited it. Kennedy, as a Catholic, had a special appeal to his co-religionists. It would be foolish to deny that he took reasonable advantage of it, but it would be unfair to say either that he curried Catholic favor or did anything to arouse anti-Protestant bias.

That religion could not be kept out of the campaign was not the fault of either candidate. Like Norman Vincent Peale, it was just *there*—and the only thing they could do was to make the most of it.

JOHN COGLEY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE SCREEN

FROM TOBAGO TO BROBDINGNAG

EVERY NOW and then the studios display enough common sense, along with their commercial perspicacity, to make the moviegoer willing to forgive them many past errors. Right now they're displaying it by releasing in time for Christmas vacations three movies that will certainly delight the young fry. Not only are these fine films for the children, but parents will not be bored.

After the success of "Pollyanna," Walt Disney must have realized he could do a kids' story in such a way that it would appeal to adults. He has done it again with "Swiss Family Robinson." Although he made considerable changes and dropped most of Johann Wyss' rather sticky moralizing, scriptwriter Lowell S. Hawley has caught the spirit of the original story about the family who, shipwrecked on a deserted island, must fend for themselves. The tree house built by the Robinsons on the lush island in the movie is much fancier than anything Wyss dreamed up when he wrote the novel in 1813; but so is the entire movie, which was handsomely filmed in Technicolor and wide screen in the West Indies island of Tobago. Furthermore, under Ken Annakin's good direction the movie has a genial, agreeable atmosphere throughout.

Producer Bill Anderson wisely chose good actors to play the lead roles in this escapist adventure story and they add plausibility and fun to the whole affair. John Mills is properly sturdy and paternal as the father who wonders if they were wise to run away from Europe; and Dorothy McGuire is practical and loving as the wife and mother who reassures him but has cause for doubt herself as the months pass and she sees no future for her sons on this island which is a paradise without girls. These boys are played with vitality and enthusiasm by James MacArthur and Tommy Kirk as the elder two and Kevin Corcoran as their mischievous young brother.

Among the changes made from the Wyss original is the reduction of these Robinson boys to three and the addition of a young lady (Janet Munro) who, rescued by them from pirates, later provides a romantic note. The pirates are also a Disney new touch, but as led by Sessue Hayakawa they are an amiably horrendous lot. All this adds to the fun and detracts very little from the back-to-nature theme or the side lectures on the simple life and survival in adversity.

PROBABLY Jonathan Swift wouldn't recognize *Gulliver's Travels* as it has been made into a film called "The Three Worlds of Gulliver." Although much of the political satire and really hard bite are missing, the movie has some wonderful magic—thanks to Superdynamation and all the visual effects created by Ray Harryhausen. Lemuel Gulliver (Kerwin Mathews) is swept away on only two of the book's four voyages in this version; the third world referred to in the movie's title is the eighteenth-century England he first leaves in disgust and to which he finally returns realizing that, bad as it is, it's no worse than other places. Without Swift's "savage indignation," the picture has just enough satire to amuse adult audiences. When Gulliver is washed ashore in Lilliput, he finds himself involved in petty politics and the silly war that the Emperor (Basil Sydney) is waging against the people of Blefuscu because they open their eggs at the wrong end. And later when he lands in Brobdingnag, he discovers that the King, (Gregoire Aslan), under the influence of the palace magician, is as foolish and superstitious as his subjects.

Youthful audiences are certain to be delighted with the film's tricks, and they may even be impressed with the smoothness of the photography in Charles Schneer's handsome production in which Kerwin Mathews is equal in size to 1,728 Lilliputians (and eats as much as they). There are excellent shots of the giant-man moving around without stepping on these little people and trying to end the war by stealing the enemy's fleet. Later, at Brobdingnag, there are equally skillful views of Gulliver and his little wife (June Thorburn) making every effort not to be stepped on by the forty-foot-tall giants who treat the Gullivers as pets. Although some kids may see no more in "The Three Worlds of Gulliver" than an exciting and imaginative adventure, many of them are likely to get the point about the little-minded little people and the empty-headed big people.

CHARLES PERRAULT would probably be astounded at what happened to his *Cinderella,* but since this seventeenth-century writer preferred the "moderns" to the "ancients," he wouldn't crab too much that the movies have updated his story to the present and even changed the sex of the main character. He probably would be surprised, however, to find that "Cinderfella" is now a fantasy-farce and mainly a vehicle for Jerry Lewis' antics. Jerry is quite appealing at times as the drudge who's made to do all the house work by his wicked stepmother (Judith Anderson) while his pampered stepbrothers (Henry Silva, Robert Hutton) loll in the lap of luxury. This Cinderella, called Fella in the film, may be inclined to ham it up a bit as he squeezes oranges, serves a meal or cleans the house, but Jerry knows when to stop clowning to turn on the poignant act.

But the trouble with the picture is that Frank Tashlin, who wrote the script and directed didn't take a firm enough hand with his star. Several of the scenes in which Jerry Lewis is at first riotously funny run so

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

long that they wear out the joke. Furthermore Jerry is the whole show; and the good cast, which includes Ed Wynn as the Fairy Godfather and Anna Maria Alberghetti as Princess Charmein, isn't used enough. Perhaps since Mr. Lewis is also the film's producer, he wanted to get his money's worth out of his star. He did give the picture a good production with some handsome sets and costumes. But considering that the main idea is clever enough, it's too bad that the whole film didn't come up to it. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

BOOKS

Ezra Pound: the Meritorious and the Meritricious

EZRA POUND. By Charles Norman. Macmillan. $6.95.
IMPACT. By Ezra Pound, Edited by Noel Stock. Regnery. $5.

By RICHARD GILMAN

ONE OF THE quotations with which Charles Norman prefaces his biography of Ezra Pound is a line from Camus' *The Fall:* "So long as you are still alive your case is doubtful." What Camus meant was that judgment cannot be pronounced upon a uncompleted life, that everything may be changed in a moment by some movement of the spirit or shift of the heart.

But Norman intends another thing. He wishes, it seems, to establish Pound's case as problematic on social and esthetic grounds, not theological or metaphysical ones. He doesn't expect any new data from Pound; instead he picks up the poetry and the treason and the quackery to see whether they have actually delivered their own verdicts, and whether these are irreversible, to see if, in any case, the poetry and the services to poetry will outlive the treason and the shabby thought.

At least this is the kind of book that the use of Camus' line and the information on the dust jacket would lead you to expect. But such seriousness of purpose collapses rather quickly; Mr. Norman is clearly not up to giving us more than a superficial, if astonishingly detailed, account of Pound's life and times; and his biography, while not offensive in either of the ways it is possible to be offensive about Pound —through belligerent apotheosizing or doctrinaire condemnation— leaves the case as before: not problematic because life has been shown to be problematic and moral and esthetic judgments precarious, but because we have simply not been given the proper material to work with. We have been left with an obscurity, not a mystery.

Pound appears in these pages in all his *personae,* the masks he adopted both in his social existence and in his poetry (where, however, as Blackmur has shown, they constitute its matter and substance, not merely its manner.) The precocious collegian, the scourge of literary London, the exemplary figure of rebellious, art-intoxicated Paris in the twenties, the exile at Rapallo sending off the paper airplanes of his social theories, the wartime broadcaster for Italy, the U.S. Army prisoner kept like a beast in a cage, the twelve-year sojourner at St. Elizabeth's, finally the aged deportee whose head hurts because "all of Europe fell on it" — we are shown these successive incarnations through Pound's letters and recorded talk, descriptions culled from the writings of his (mostly) famous contemporaries, and reminiscences offered directly to the author.

Nothing is more important about Pound's life than his friendships. In them, though he postured and capered, making use of them at least as much for purposes of concealment as of self-revelation, he truly served art. For they were human encounters that made possible, to a greater extent than have any other in our time, the advancement of the contemporary imagination and the renewed health of literature. Mr. Norman, out of his penchant for inconsequential detail and his somewhat gossipy interest in the ambience of literature, gives us almost more than we can assimilate of these friendships—with Eliot, Yeats, Williams, Cummings, Joyce, Ford Madox Ford, Wyndham Lewis, Hemingway and Marianne Moore— all of whom have acknowledged the debt they owed Pound's criticism, example and untiring activity on their behalf.

Norman also provides us with some shallow consideration of the poetry, making the valid point that Pound will ultimately be judged by the *Cantos,* but offering little in the way of exegesis or even of sensitive response. But his greatest failure, it seems to me, is his refusal or inability to relate the poetry to the man, to come to grips with the question Yeats posed—how "a man who produces the most distinguished work (can be) in his behaviour the least distinguished of men"—and beyond this to trace the effects of Pound's deficiencies of mind (his basic unoriginality and lack of synthesizing power) in his writing, where it produces his mad political thought and is responsible for the notable defects of the *Cantos,* as Blackmur has so cogently shown.

Pound's true achievement lies in his role in revivifying poetry, in purifying it and raising the level of its *sound,* much more than its quality of revelation or depth of feeling. "To write the acceptable word . . . My mouth to chant the pure singing!" he wrote in *De Aegypto.* Where, as in the *Cantos,* his ambition outraces these modest goals and becomes something as grandiose as this:

To know the histories
To know good from evil
And know whom to trust.
(Canto 89)

we are entitled to learn the degree of his success and the nature of his failure.

It is just this sort of job that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Norman hasn't done. Instead, whenever he leaves off his straight narrative for a moment, he is likely to offer us observations of this order: "Something was driving Pound—eastward as it happened . . . Perhaps he was running from something—himself, most likely."

This is hardly what you expect to find in a study advertised as "definitive."

I had an idea what to expect when I picked up the volume of Pound's socio-economic writings which the Henry Regnery Company has published under the title *Impact* (from one of Pound's pamphlets on money), with the portentous subtitle: "Essays on ignorance and the decline of American civilization." I make a point of mentioning the publisher, because whom else shall we credit with the statement on the dust jacket that the reader is about to meet "a great mind, unique in our generation," and who, after all, thought it desirable to bring out so abominable a book as this one?

Abominable. I don't think the word is too strong. For these essays, fragments and letters on monetary theory, ideas of order and interpretations of American history, show Pound in so bad a light that it is difficult to believe that he was ever anything but the worst sort of crank.

Here is the ranting about "usurocracy," the obsession with John Adams and Martin Van Buren, the praise of Fascism, the anti-semitism ("semitic insanity"; "The United States was sold to the Rothschilds in 1863,") the gutter language (Roosevelt is "that scum in the White House"; professors are "agglomerates of protoplasm,") the uncontrolled arrogance, and the simplistic approach to social phenomena (Norman quotes Malcolm Cowley as saying that Pound "was always finding the lowdown, the inside story and the simple reason why.")

In the introduction by Noel Stock, who also edited the book, there is high praise for Pound's "sense of responsibility." The irony is so great that I can only conclude that irony is intended and that *Impact's* publication is really the work of anti-Poundites, eager to see him discredited once and for all. In any case, if Pound's preposterous ideas and viciousness in this anthology, which might better have been called *The Worst of Ezra,* do not queer him with you forever, something else might. For I haven't mentioned the book's chief quality: its overwhelming, monumental, unbelievable dullness. I doubt whether any book by a writer with a major reputation was ever so unrelentingly boring.

The "Simple" Way of Holiness

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES: Selected Letters. Translated, with an Introduction, by Elisabeth Stopp. Harper. $5.
FRANCOIS DE SALES. By Michael de la Bedoyere. Harper. $4.

By PHILIP BURNHAM

THE WAY of holiness, which he most winningly practiced and most seductively wrote about, is the first interest and importance of Saint Francis de Sales. Saint Francis died in 1622, and now his writings which reflect his life and teaching—a beautiful and creative Catholic and French literature—are the main thing: in the year 1877, Pope Pius IX declared him a Doctor of the Church.

The most formal works of Saint Francis were the *Introduction to the Devout Life* and *Treatise on the Love of God,* themselves probably the least formidable of religious masterpieces. His informal "conferences" with the Visitation nuns, and still more, the many personal letters, appear to be his most natural and direct expression. He was a supremely good letter-writer, in temperament, style and word. Reading the excellent selections and translations by Elisabeth Stopp, there is a constant delight of recognition, coming upon images and sentences and ideas which are classics of Christian culture. Then, the major part of Saint Francis' vocation was to be an intimate friend and counselor of many men and women. His way of holiness was not highly systematized, but rather experimental, and, as he always insisted, "simple," so that it needed constant particular application, for "simple" does not mean "easy."

Saint Francis de Sales is too frequently regarded as an "easy" saint, with a "humanist" attitude and ethics, rather relaxed and indulgent. This is a careless view, which a reading of the *Letters* should easily correct. Louis Lavelle, in his recent book, "The Meaning of Holiness," studies in Saint Francis "the unity of will and love," and he shows that the will, perhaps restricted in the scope of activity Saint Francis assigns to it more than in some other philosophical and ethical theories, yet must operate with an unwearied discipline. Working in its proper sphere, the human will does not try to take the place of God's creative will, and does not try to manufacture a Christian machine. Saint Francis de Sales is an absolute enemy of psychological "anxiety," and of mechanical piety. We are to be "patient" with ourselves, and even with our faults and falls. Such patience is not sloth and laxity, but a decent recognition of what we actually are and of what need we have of God. The liberty worth all work and will-power is the joyful freedom from egoism. "The effects of this liberty," he wrote to Saint Jane de Chantal, "are great sweetness of mind, great gentleness and a ready kindness is everything which does not entail sin; it is that supple and gentle attitude which is ready to do anything virtuous and charitable."

Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, with whom he founded the order of Visitation Nuns, was the most famous correspondent of Saint Francis de Sales, and the greatest soul which he "directed." There are tremendous expressions of love for her in these letters, and the reader is almost called upon to make a special study of the quality of this love. They were no Heloise and Abelard. The saints were undoubtedly at-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tempting to develop a great combined love of God, rather than reciprocal affection for each other. Saint Francis, it appears, was also instructing Saint Jane in the nature of love itself by his warm and confident expressions of love for her, through Christ.

There are, indeed, points in the letters leading into many fields of interest. Saint Francis uses the Bible brilliantly, and little else, in quotations. He follows the liturgical calendar closely, but does not fit into many other phases of the modern liturgical movement. He inaugurated a new era in relations with Protestants; he befriended Angélique Arnaud before she became the Abbess of Jansenism. He shunned lawsuits, but accepted the contemporary property set-up. He did not protest the *ancien régime* in which he flourished, but he was disenchanted with its "world."

Michael de la Bedoyere's new biography, *Francois de Sales,* fairly, if somewhat manneredly, describes the complexity of the Saint's multiple vocation as very active Prince Bishop of Geneva and Annecy, and very contemplative spiritual director and propagator of a new "way" of devotion. Bedoyere concentrates upon the hardness of Saint Francis' life as he reduced to the vanishing point any natural passions of self-assertion, and trained himself to the constant public and private service of his neighbor.

By nature and breeding and position, Francis was a man of immense charm and attraction and capability, so nearly all the possibilities of his day were open before him. He did not exploit the opportunities for his own gain and glory, but on the contrary, he submitted to all demands and gave himself to all who sought him with extraordinary completeness. His friend, Henry IV, said of him: "A rare bird indeed; devout, learned and a gentleman into the bargain." Another friend, Saint Vincent de Paul, testified: "So closely did he model his life on Our Lord, as I myself saw, that many a time I asked myself with astonishment how a mere creature could reach so high a degree of perfection, given human frailty. . . ."

A Tale of Suffering and Expiation

THE LAST OF THE JUST. By André Schwarz-Bart. Translated by Stephen Becker. Atheneum. $4.95.

By ALICE ELLEN MAYHEW

THIS IS an extraordinary tale of an ancient Jewish tradition of suffering and expiation, written in blood across nine-hundred years. It starts in New York in the year 1000, and culminates in a Nazi gas chamber, in 1944. It is the story of the family Lévy, and of the Jewish heart which must break a thousand times for the good of all peoples, and of the Lamed-Vov, or the Just Men, of whom there are always thirty-six in the world—one Lévy out of each generation being always chosen.

According to the tradition, the world reposes on these Justs who are chosen by God to make tolerable the sufferings of mankind, for if only one were missing, humanity would suffocate. Sometimes they are indistinguishable from other men and unaware of their station. The truly unknown—only the last of the Lévys (the late Ernie) was a "truly unknown"—are the most pitiable. Denied the comfort of faith, they have been known to weep drops of blood and be transformed into dogs, to remain, in other words, *forever inconsolable* at human woe. A Hasidic story recounts that, "When an unknown Just rises to Heaven, he is so frozen that God must warm him for one-thousand years between His fingers before his soul can open itself to Paradise."

Unlike many of the other stories of the Jewish trial in modern Europe (and elsewhere), M. Schwarz-Bart makes it plain that there is a direct connection between Jewish suffering and Divine vocation. His book, therefore, despite its diffusion and occasional staginess, has direction. He speaks of the "humble procession of the Jewish people" as a mystery too difficult for men but as something, surely, known to God. "O companions of our ancient exile," wrote Simeon Reubeni of Mantua, "as the rivers go to the sea all our tears flow in the heart of God."

The Last of the Just is really the story of Ernie Lévy but it had started with his ancestor (in 1000 A.D.), the Rabbi Yom Tov Lévy who had slain hundreds of his own people to protect them from persecution, and

SABBATH

Here silence seals horizons.
Silence sifts
Down all around as sweetly through my thoughts
As sunlight drifts
Through leaves, and folds within my heart
In golden shoals
As sun upon the ground. The heavy foliage
Drips shadow pools
Of soundlessness, green velvet pools of shade,
That mingle with the sun
And stillness in my heart and in this grove.
Quiet and the sun
Have sealed us in a green and golden Sabbath
Where trunks of trees
Like prayer mount motionless in silent, solid song.

This place, sealed in silence, bland as
Sunlight all within,
Is God's. Walk in and out at will, Lord,
Walk out and in.

SISTER M. DAVIDA, I.H.M.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whose solitary agony was unbearable to God so that the family was given the grace of one Just Man to each generation. He tells the story of this family over the next centuries, briefly, their martyrdoms and their flights: from England, to France, back to England (expulsed), to Hamburg, to Portugal, back to France (expulsed), to Spain (expulsed), to Italy, back to Portugal, to Germany (piously chased from one city to another by the Christian princes), to Bohemia, Moravia, to Russia, to Poland (and the pograms), to Germany (soon to fall to the Nazis), to France (which falls to Germany), to Auschwitz.

"O Lord," the Just Man Ernie Lévy says to himself as he walks into the gas chamber in company with hundreds of his people, "We are very old. We are still walking. Oh, let us arrive, finally!" Ernie, having passed through the last circle of the Lévys' hell, arrived, in an extermination camp of the "ultimate solution," only one of the many drains inserted into Europe's *passive* flanks. Wherein the other side of the mystery—Christendom. "Jesus," Ernie has told his frightened love, "was a merciful and gentle man. The Christians say they love Him, but I think they hate Him without knowing it. So they take the cross by the other end and make a sword of it." But what of the French doctor, one eighth Jewish, a Christian and a Frenchman (previously unaware of his Semitic blood) imprisoned by the Nazis? He thinks of two thousand years of Christianity that allowed. . . . And yet, he still believes. Not in the blond Christ of the cathedrals any more but in *Him*, though, he says, "He's *something else.*" The eternal martyr, perhaps, the expiator.

M. Schwarz-Bart is at his best when he finally gets to Ernie. Ernie, who is just a little boy when the Nazi terrorists rise up in Germany, is a magnificent creation, fully characterized but still a mystery. He has no intention of glorifying himself, or separating himself from his people, and yet even as a child (his grandfather, the patriarch having told him the history of the Justs), he *is* different, suffering more deeply, taking on himself the suffering of all his people. Persecuted, beaten, reviled (at twelve, he has slashed his wrists and jumped out the window), he survives right to the harrowing end, wondering himself about the toughness of his soul. "O God," he prays, "You have given me the soul of a cat: it must be murdered nine times before it dies." The faith of these people, however, is the crux of the book. M. Schwarz-Bart writes about the Jews and their religion with a rare sense of mysticism—and he ends his story of the destruction with the words: *"And praised Be the Lord."*

Hewn from the Memory

SHADOWS ON THE GRASS. By Isak Dinesen. Random House. $3.75.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

ISAK DINESEN published her famous stories, *Out of Africa,* twenty-three years ago, and she has written the stories in *Shadows on the Grass* as a form of delayed epilogue to the earlier volume. The mutations of time have not seriously blurred the transmutations of the artist. Yet in the present work as in that of 1937 reminiscence in fact overbalances invention.

The two collections would appear to be united further in falling outside the main body of Miss Dinesen's creative output, those stories —*Seven Gothic Tales, Winter's Tales,* etc.—which are so universally admired; yet they are hewn out of memory no less artfully than the others are of imagination, and they are set down in the same artful English. The four stories in *Shadows on the Grass* are triumphantly sentimental and gently anecdotal; yet within their miniature frame they have many of the qualities of the finest storytelling. They have a poetic wisdom—crossed at times, it is true, with a hunter's mystique—skilfully folded into the narrative, and they have, after all, history.

"Farah" is the "portrait of a gentleman," namely the Somali majordomo of the author's household in Kenya, the "greatest gentleman" she had ever met: loyal beyond reproach, yet in the manner of a cheetah, a high-born Mohammedan in the house of an equally high-born Danish lady pioneer on a coffee plantation at the time of the first world war and after. Farah is invoked as a symbol of a dark spirituality too proud to analyze itself to the world (Islam of course does not seek to justify God to man, it is enough to show that "God is. great"). He is not a viable personality, but Miss Dinesen does communicate her deep personal attachment to him, and, most touchingly, the anachronism of their master-servant relation (as picturesque, she believes, as that of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza).

No special plea is voiced for this lost unity, yet simply in telling of it, of how it shaped the entire course of her life with the Somalis and the black natives, Miss Dinesen shows that the African native once lived face to face with the European aristocrat in much closer harmony and understanding than he has done with the great white meddlers who swarmed out to colonize British East Africa between the wars, bringing their gadflies of social and political equality with them.

The aristocratic pioneers, viewing with haughty amusement the colonizers' sweeping program of domestication, cast their lot with the wild animals, who, like Farah, still stood in direct contact with God. The Missions went to extraordinary effort to make the natives put on trousers, "in which they looked like giraffes in harness"; the businessmen urged competitive respectability on the Africans so that they would come to evaluate themselves and each other by their possessions; and it began to look as though one day the lions themselves would have their meals served them from Game Dept. canteens. But the natives proved balkiest and most bewilder-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing when it came to being hospitalized: "What by now most of all they feared from our hands was boredom, and on being taken into hospital they may well have felt that they were in good earnest being taken in to die of boredom."

Political shibboleths can never unite peoples. What the newcomers failed to realize was that the Africans had a past that they themselves lacked, that its roots were deep, and that "like all roots, it demanded darkness"; thus it was only those white settlers whose own past was still a reality to them who could establish rapport with their new neighbors. The "blazing lights of our civilization" were being turned into dark eyes, and if for a long enough time "we continue to dazzle and blind the Africans, we may in the end bring upon them a longing for darkness which will drive them into the gorges of their own unknown mountains and their own unknown minds."

What impresses the author as the most admirable characteristic of the African, and what at the same time appear so to be the most formidable block between him and the white man is a "silent, all-embracing genius of a consent."

The chapters, "Barua a Soldani" (Letter from a King) and "The Great Gesture," are the most storyful. The first tells of the pain-healing effect a letter the author receives from the King of Denmark actually has upon an injured native workman who, like all his tribe, believes in the miraculous pain-killing power of such a letter. The other story is filled with moving perceptions and amusing incidents as the author writes of the many natives she helped to treat medically in her own private dispensary.

In the final chapter, "Echoes from the Hills," memories shade off into dream and enter a new life out of time; indeed it is through dream the author confirms her hold on the past; and with it thus secured she feels free to trace down all her old friends of far away, finding that they are at last securing a present—Miss Dinesen will not say that the falcon has yet traded decency for respectability—while remaining ever loyal to the past they shared with her.

REVIEWERS

Richard Gilman contributes regularly to various literary journals.

Philip Burnham, a former editor of The Commonweal, remains a frequent contributor to these pages.

Alice Ellen Mayhew is on the staff of a well-known New York publishing house.

William Dunlea is a free-lance writer who makes his home in New York.

LOOK AHEAD!

Mr. Magoo says you can't afford to be near-sighted about cancer. Too dangerous. Too much to lose. Maybe your life.

Got to look ahead. Play it safe. Many cancers can be cured if detected early and treated promptly.

Be far-sighted. Have a health checkup every year. It could save your life.

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

RECORDS

Varieties of Beethoven

EVEREST, with a minimum of fanfare, has released an absolutely firstclass edition of the nine Beethoven symphonies, plus two overtures (Egmont and Leonore No. 3). Principals involved are the London Symphony Orchestra and conductor Joseph Krips.

It should be noted at once that this is the best-sounding of all the stereo recordings of the Beethoven symphonies. Everest, as a matter of policy, refuses to crowd its microgrooves, and the nine symphonies and two overtures here occupy eight discs compared to the usual seven. The set is therefore free from all annoying pre- and post-echoes.

But the most remarkable technical accomplishment is the manner in which individual timbres are defined without fragmentation of the total orchestral sound. At any point in the course of any of the symphonies one can localize a particular instrument and follow its melodic thread through and against the overall orchestral fabric. Other sonic wonders include the spatial reaches of the sixth and ninth symphonies; the astonishingly real solo statements of the horn in the opening measures of the fifth; the quicksilver skips of the scherzo theme in the second.

Krips' direction is as impressive as the engineering of this set. He grounds his concepts on clean rhythms and hearty sound. When these characteristics lie at the root of Beethoven's thought, as in the fourth, sixth and seventh symphonies, the results are irreproachable. However, Krips, in moving forward, occasionally does not allow enough "breathing space" between phrases and shifts in mood, as in the sixth symphony. This impatience is also evident at various points in the choral symphony. But the conductor never relaxes his grasp of the overall concept, without which no symphony can be bound into an organic whole.

Based on this performance, Krips must be ranked very close to Walter and Klemperer and somewhat behind Toscanini, who heads the list now and probably will continue to head it for years to come.

Angel has released the last two of the Klemperer-Beethoven symphonic series: number two (coupled with the Coriolanus and Prometheus overtures), and number four (coupled with Consecra-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of the House overture.) Massively logical in his building from opening notes to final chords, Klemperer is "majestic" where Krips is "human." Both the majesty and the humanity of Beethoven are legitimate points of view. Walter, of course, inclines even more than Krips to the "human" approach, while Toscanini, somehow in his chastely classical, fanatically faithful adherence to the score, manages to be simultaneously majestic and human and, at times, exalted.

The Wilhelm Backhaus-Schmidt-Isserstedt-Vienna Philharmonic edition of the five Beethoven piano concertos (London) is completed this month with the release of concerto number two, coupled with the Moonlight sonata. Septuagenarian Backhaus continues his amazing show of vitality and strength, striking off the notes with the easy power of a much younger man.

A new Deutsche-Grammophon Archive (History of Music) release includes several notable albums. Loveliest and most interesting is Orlandus Lassus' Seven Penitential Psalms of David, soloists and choral-orchestral forces led by Rudolph Pohl. Helmut, Kreb, Hans-Joachim Rotzsch, Hans-Olaf Hudemann and the Aachener Domsingknaben share vocal chores.

Other items in the current Archive release include the Concerti Grossi Opus 3 by Handel, soloists and ensemble led by August Wenzinger; a madrigal comedy, "La Pazzia Senile" by Adriano Banchieri; seven madrigals by Monteverdi; an interesting "Story of the Resurrection of Christ," by Henrich Schutz; and Bach's "Goldberg Variations," played on the harpsichord by Ralph Kirkpatrick. All of these are first-rate performances, the Handel albums ranking with the best in that repertoire.

A new stereo version of "La Traviata" (Capitol) finds Victoria de Los Angeles in not her best voice; a somewhat bawling tenor, Carlo del Monte; and a too closeup miking of the whole preceedings at the Rome Opera House, with the result that one hears a distractingly harsh, grainy sound. Tullio Serafin is the conductor and must share the guilt.

Vera Zorina is the narrator in a stereo recording of Debussy's "The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian," (Columbia), a highly romanticized work, and while she is competent, her dramatic range is limited in terms of both perception and intensity. Hilde Gueden, the soprano, and the Philadelphia Orchestra and Chorus under Eugene Ormandy make this, however, an interesting performance.

The late Ernst von Dohnanyi recorded (for Everest) some of his own piano compositions last February and died a few weeks later at the age of 82. The results of his recording are at hand and are, of course, now a memorial album, a collector's item which acquires immediately a value beyond the price of the disc. The program includes Five Pieces from "Ruralia Hungarica"; Three Pieces, Op. 23; Etudes de Concert, Op. 28; Rhapsody in F Sharp Minor, Op. 11 and the Treasure Waltz from "The Gypsy Baron." The occasional slurred notes do not detract from the performance; under the circumstances, they add a measure of authenticity, charm and poignancy.

Two final albums from London must be mentioned because of the excellence of their execution: the Mozart Clarinet Concerto (Gervase de Peyer, soloist) and Mozart's Horn Concertos Nos. 1 and 3 (Barry Tuckwell, soloist) with the London Symphony Orchestra under one of our finest Mozart interpreters today, Peter Maag, the other item is the Carmierelli Quartet's strong, sensitive playing of the Ravel String Quartet and Prokofiev's String Quartet No. 2. De Peyer's performance of the Clarinet Concerto is the finest available: deft, suave, intelligent, witty. Maag's collaboration is flawless.

DON WOOTEN

BARNES & NOBLE, Inc.
105 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, N.Y.
Over 1,000,000 Used & New Textbooks of all publishers at reduced prices

Educational

NEW JERSEY

Georgian Court College

Four-year course leading to B.A. and B.S. degree provides a solid background of general culture and special training in one particular field. Well-integrated program in Liberal Arts, Fine Arts, Science, Music, Home Economics, Business Administration, Teacher Training. Fully accredited. Address Secretary, Lakewood, N.J.

INDIANA

Saint Mary's College
Notre Dame

Graduate School of Sacred Theology For Sisters and Laywomen. Distinguished faculty of Religious and Lay Professors. Saint Mary's College, Box 11, Notre Dame, Indiana.

Classified

Irish Books and Gifts

• Books, Linens, Gifts, Catalogs
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, INC.
870 Lexington Ave., (near 65th) New York

Catholic Books

• CATHOLIC BOOKS, NEW and USED
Free Lists, Free Search Service
C. F. PETELLE, Box 289, Maywood, Illinois

Phonograph Record

• CHRISTMAS NOVENA RECORD, Holy Cross Choristers, St. Louis. $3.50. PIO DECIMO PRESS, St. Louis 15, Mo.

Oil Painting

• AUTHENTIC OIL PAINTING of Christ for sale. Photo submitted free. GLOUCESTER ARTS, P. O. Box 538, Gloucester, Mass.

Advertising

Classified

20¢ a word, 12 words minimum
Centered lines: $1.20 a line, 2 lines minimum.
Time discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times.

Classified Display

$11.90 per Inch, minimum.
Same time discounts.
Payable in advance except when ordered through recognized advertising agencies.

The Commonweal

386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y.
MUrray Hill 3-9685

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THERE'S STILL TIME...

to give The Commonweal for Christmas and the coming year, to a relative or friend—doctor, housewife, lawyer, college or seminary student, businessman, farmer, labor leader or teacher (priest, layman or Religious)—to someone who will greatly enjoy the magazine's varied and stimulating approach to issues of the day during this year of domestic transition and world change.

Your Commonweal Christmas Gift Subscription will provide an abundance of good reading: twelve hundred pages of thoughtful, candid comment on American and overseas developments, political and artistic... together with the social and literary comment of such authors as Bede Griffiths, John P. Sisk, Vivian Mercier, Bernard Murchland, Matthew Mestrovic, Thomas Molnar, Betty Kaufman, Richard Gilman and others.

Your gift subscriptions will also supply a number of firsthand dispatches from Italy, France and Britain and other lands, outspoken and healthy exchanges of opinion in readers' letters and those many keys to further enjoyment supplied by The Commonweal's discerning reviews of current books, plays and movies.

Special 1960 Christmas rates, which you may apply to your own subscription renewal regardless of expiration date, are in force until January 15. One subscription costs $8., additional subscriptions: $6.50 each. (Postage outside the United States and Canada: $2. a year.)

Last minute gift orders may be phoned in or wired collect.

CHRISTMAS ORDER FORM
(or model for facsimile)

THE COMMONWEAL, 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., MU 3-9685

Enclosed is $..... Send The Commonweal for one year to:

NAME
STREET
CITY, ZONE, STATE

NAME
STREET
CITY, ZONE, STATE

NAME
STREET
CITY, ZONE, STATE

MY NAME IS
STREET
CITY, ZONE, STATE

12/23/60

Mail Gift Cards ☐ to me ☐ for me

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED